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AUTHOR Phelan, Patricia; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This 2-year longitudinal study is being conducted better to understand the lives of secondary school students as they move from one social setting to another and to draw implications for learning as teachers are provided with a more holistic picture. The study describes students' interrelationships with family, school, and peers; perceptions of boundaries between worlds; and adaptation strategies employed in order to move from one context to another. Participants include 54 diverse students attending 4 large, urban, desegregated high schools. Data were gathered from student interviews, classroom observation, school records, demographic and descriptive material, and teacher interviews. A model has emerged identifying four types of students. The first type comes from a two-parent household valuing family cohesiveness and functioning in a world that is congruent and offers smooth transitions. The second belongs to a world that is different with respect to culture, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or religion, but within which the youngster manages successfully to traverse boundaries. The third type represents students whose worlds are different and who cross boundaries only under certain conditions. The fourth type includes those who describe boundary crossing as impenetrable and insurmountable. Possibly the most significant implication of the multiple worlds model is that it provides teachers and others a way of thinking about students in a more holistic way. (LL)

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# CRC

Center for Research on the Context of Secondary Teaching
School of Education, CERAS Building, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-3084

## STUDENTS' MULTIPLE WORLDS: NEGOTIATING THE BOUNDARIES OF FAMILY, PEER, AND SCHOOL CULTURES

P91-129

Patricia Phelan
Ann Locke Davidson
Hanh Thanh Cao

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Patricia Phelan
Ann Locke Davidson
Hanh Thanh Cao

Stanford University

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# STUDENTS' MULTIPLE WORLDS: NEGOTIATING THE BOUNDARIES OF FAMILY, PEER, AND SCHOOL CULTURES

Patricia Phelan, Ann Locke Davidson and Hanh Thanh Cao

On any given school day, adolescents in this society move from one social context to another. Families, peer groups, classrooms, and schools are primary arenas in which young people negotiate and construct their realities. For the most part, students' movements and adaptations from one setting to another are taken for granted. Although such transitions frequently require students' efforts and skills, especially when contexts are governed by different values and norms, there has been relatively little study of this process. From data gathered during the first phase of the Students' Multiple Worlds Study, it appears that, in our culture, many adolescents are left to navigate transitions without direct assistance from persons in any of their contexts, most notably the school. Further, young people's success in managing these transitions varies widely. Yet students' competence in moving between settings has tremendous implications for the quality of their lives and their chances of using the educational system as a stepping stone to further education, productive work experiences, and a meaningful adult life.

This article describes the Students' Multiple Worlds Study and the framework which has evolved during the first year of the investigation.[1] Our purpose is twofold:

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[1]The "Students' Multiple Worlds" study falls within the framework of the Center for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching (CRC). During the first year of the Center's field-based research, teachers described the ways in which students' characteristics (motivation and goals, attitudes and abilities, behaviors, language proficiency, family supports, etc.) affected their teaching decisions, the settings in which they worked, and their view of responsibilities. Since the overall CRC strategy assumes "that the workplace is socially constructed by participants in the setting," the Student Study was initiated to better understand the lives of secondary school students and the interactive dimensions of students with classrooms, teachers and school environments. This study began in the fall of 1989 with an emphasis on students' perspectives--specifically, how adolescents view and define what is significant in affecting their school experiences.



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first, to describe family, school, and peer worlds, the interrelationships among them, and in particular, how meanings and understandings combine to affect students' engagement with learning; second, to understand students' perceptions of boundaries between worlds and adaptation strategies they employ as they move from one context to another. We use the term "world" to mean cultural knowledge and behavior found within the boundaries of students' particular families, peer groups, and schools; we presume that each world contains values and beliefs, expectations, actions, and emotional responses familiar to insiders. We use the terms social setting, arena, and context to refer to places and events within which individuals act and interact. Students employ cultural knowledge acquired from their family, peer, and school worlds in social settings and contexts. Social settings and contexts may be found within the bounds of any one world (e.g., a student having dinner with family members) or may include actors from various worlds (e.g., students interacting with friends in classrooms or friends visiting in each others' homes). In the latter case, people in the same social setting may or may not share the same cultural knowledge acquired from the constellation of their individual worlds.[2] The terms boundaries and borders refer to real or perceived lines or barriers between worlds.

Prior research generally has focused on families, peers, and schools as distinct entities. We know that any one can affect powerfully the direction in which adolescents will be pulled. For example, dynamic teachers, vigorous schools, and programs targeted to override the negative effects associated with low socio-economic status, limited motivation, and language and cultural barriers can produce committed, interested and

[2] Our use of the term world corresponds closely to Spradley and McCurdy's definition of "cultural scene." Likewise, the terms social settings, arenas, and contexts in this study parallel their definition of "social situations" (Spradley and McCurdy 1972:25-30).

academically engaged individuals (Edmonds 1979; Rutter 1979; Sharan 1980; Johnson 1981; Heath 1982; Walberg 1986; Vogt et al. 1987; Slavin 1988, 1989; Joyce, et al. 1989; Abi-Nader 1990). Likewise, research on peer groups has described the potency and force with which members pull young people towards the norms of groups (Coleman 1963; Clement 1978; Larkin 1979; Varenne 1982; Clasen 1985; Ueda 1987; Eckert 1989). We know too, that family indices such as socio-economic status and parents' educational levels are important predictors of students' engagement with educational settings (Jencks 1972), as are cultural expectations and beliefs (Ogbu 1983, 1987; Clark 1983; Fordham 1988; Erickson 1987; Gibson 1987; McDermott 1987; Spindler 1987, 1989; Suarez-Orozco 1985, 1987; Trueba 1982, 1988; Hoffman 1988).

In other words, we know a great deal about how aspects of families, schools, and teachers, and peer groups affect educational outcomes. But we know little about how these worlds combine in the day-to-day lives of adolescents to affect their engagement with school and classroom contexts. Thus far, there has been almost no attempt to understand how students' multiple worlds interact with one another or the processes young people use to manage, more or less successfully, the transitions among various social settings. Steinberg et al. (1988:43) also note this neglect in educational research: "Virtually absent from the literature are studies that examine student and contextual influences in interaction with each other."

In this study our focus is on the individual as mediator and integrator of meaning and experience in contrast to single context approaches which compartmentalize aspects of students' lives--those studies in which peer groups, family, and school variables are studied independently of one another. Although research in these areas has provided a great deal of important information, it is the researcher who determines the focus rather

than the individual, thereby increasing chances of misinterpretation. For example, studies which focus on peer groups alone may miss the significance of school and classroom features which condition the choice or effects of a peer group. Likewise, studies of teachers and pedagogy can obscure other features of adolescents' lives, such as peer group interactions or cultural background factors, which combine to impact students' engagement with learning.

As educators attempt to create optimal school environments for increasingly diverse populations, we need to know how students negotiate boundaries successfully, or alternatively, how they are impeded by barriers which prevent their connection, not only with institutional contexts, but with peers who are different than themselves. We believe that understanding students' multiple worlds and boundary crossing behavior is vital in a world where barriers continue to block understanding and obstruct attempts to develop and implement policies which will insure the success of all students in today's schools. This study is a step towards reaching these goals.

## Students' Multiple Worlds/Typology of Adaptation

During the first year and one-half of this two-year longitudinal study, the student study team has had an opportunity to know 54 students in four high schools increasingly well. The large, urban, desegregated schools in our sample are paired across districts: Maple High School (Montevideo District) and Explorer High School (Bolivar District) have experienced fairly dramatic changes in the demography of their student populations, while Canyon High School (Montevideo District) and Huntington High

School (Bolivar District) had more stable populations when the student began.[3] A majority of the students, selected to represent some of the diversity found in many of California's large urban high schools, were in their first year of high school when the study began in Fall, 1989. Students vary on a number of dimensions, including gender, ethnicity, achievement level, immigrant history, and busing status. An equal number of high and low achieving students were selected from each school and both minority and majority students are included in the two achievement categories. Students were asked to participate by school personnel.

Three in-depth interviews with each of 54 students provide information on students' perceptions of classrooms and schools, the importance and influence of friends and peer groups, and family conditions that are significant to their lives. In addition, informal conversations and interviews with ten of the 54 students supplement more formal data collection methods. Observations in classrooms furnish documentation of interactions between adolescents and their teachers and peers in classroom contexts. Student record data (which include standardized test scores, grades, teacher comments, and attendance and referral records) contribute a picture of achievement patterns and teacher perceptions of individual students over time. Additionally, we obtained demographic and descriptive information about students and their families. Finally, we interviewed teachers about their perceptions of students' academic performance, classroom interactions, social and peer group behavior, and family background.

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[3]See appendix A for a description of the four schools from which our study sample was drawn. Note that although Huntington High School was selected originally because of its relative stable student population, during the course of this study, the minority student population has increased to 49%. Seven percent of these students participate in the district's busing program.



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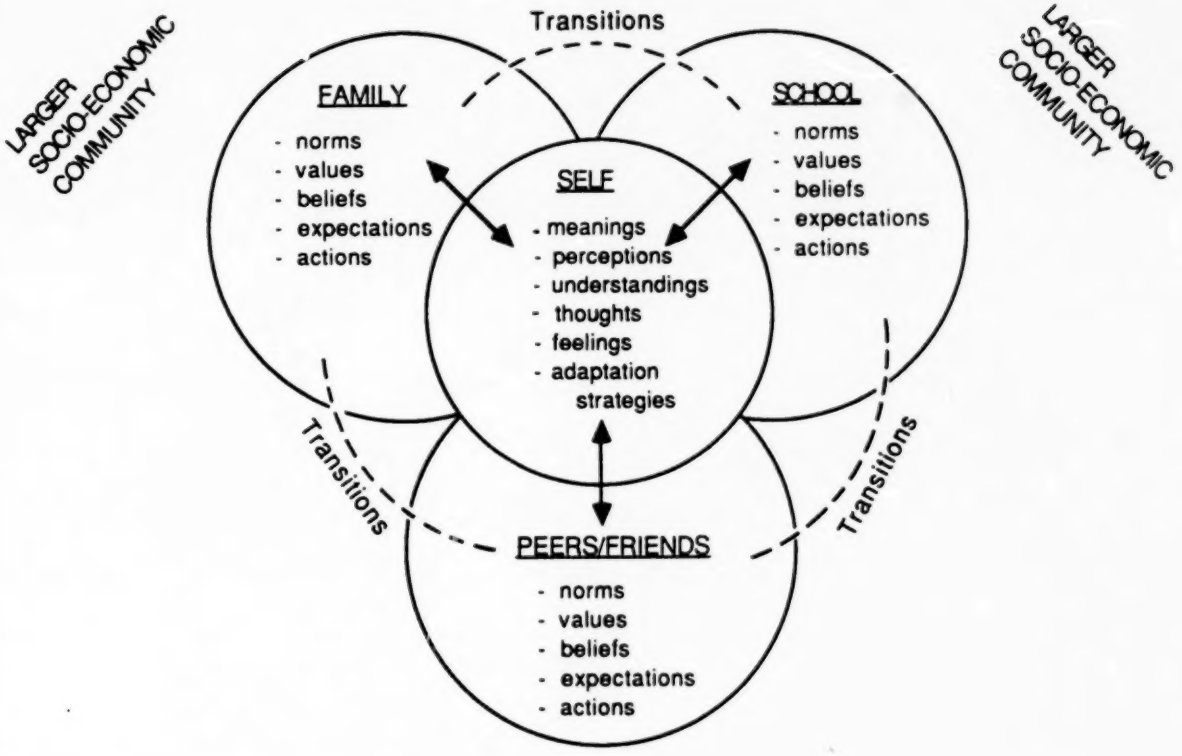
As the study began, our emphasis was on students' descriptions of school factors which affect their engagement with learning--for example, classroom organization, teacher attitudes and behaviors, pedagogy, and overall school climate. However, the use of open-ended interviews allowed students to talk about other features of their lives (i.e., peers and family) relevant to their feelings about school. "I wouldn't let them put me in a higher track because I wanted to be with my friends," reported one student. "At least in my family it's sort of expected that you're going to try to get A's or something close," said another. "Being Mexican means being popular, cutting classes, acting crazy," reported yet another student.

As a result, a model evolved to describe students' multiple worlds and the relationships among them. Particularly important is our focus on the nature of boundaries and processes of movement between worlds, as well as strategies that students employ to adapt to different contexts and settings. As depicted in Model A, the meanings drawn from each of these worlds combine to influence students' actions. For example, if parents emphasize school achievement but friends devalue good grades, young people must incorporate and manage these different perspectives while deciding on their own course of action.

The emergence of the Multiple Worlds model is an important development of the first year of this investigation. Unlike most other approaches which focus attention on stable characteristics of individuals (e.g., gender and ethnicity) or concentrate on language acquisition or achievement level alone, the Multiple Worlds model is generic. It is neither ethnic, achievement, or gender specific, but transcends these categories to consider multiple worlds, boundary crossing, and adaptation for <u>all</u> students. The generic nature of the model is particularly useful for understanding diversity within

MODEL A



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ethnic groups. For example, we have seen that all students--Hispanic, Vietnamese, Filipino, Black, and Caucasian--may perceive boundaries very differently and utilize various adaptation strategies as they move from one setting to another.

As our study has proceeded we have found a good deal of variety in students' descriptions of their worlds and in their perceptions of boundaries.[4] At the same time, we have also uncovered distinctive patterns among students as they migrate across settings. We use a typology to illustrate four patterns:

Type I: Congruent Worlds/Smooth Transitions

Type II: Different Worlds/Boundary Crossings Managed

Type III: Different Worlds/Boundary Crossings Hazardous

Type IV: Borders Impenetrable/Boundary Crossing Insurmountable

The patterns we describe are not necessarily stable for individual students over time, but rather can be affected by external conditions such as classroom or school climate conditions, family circumstances, or changes in peer group affiliations.[5] Each of the four types includes the variety of combinations possible with respect to perceived boundaries (e.g., between family and school; peers and family; peers/family and school, etc.) and each combination is characterized in different ways by different students. Our descriptions of students illustrate only some of the combinations possible. Both functional and dysfunctional patterns of behavior are contained in this typology. We will see that some of the superficially approved styles of adaptation can be as potentially dysfunctional as those where discordant patterns seem to dominate.

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[4]See Appendix B for a description of the student study sample by transition pattern and school.

[5]In our sample of 54 students, 17 have exhibited different patterns with respect to perceived boundaries and border crossing strategies during the first year and one-half of this study.

Type I: Congruent Worlds/Smooth Transitions

For some students, values, beliefs, expectations, and normative ways of behaving are, for the most part, parallel across worlds. Although the circumstances of daily contexts change, such students barely perceive boundaries between their family, peer, and schools worlds. Movement from one setting to another is seen as harmonious and uncomplicated. This does not mean that students act exactly the same way or discuss the same things with teachers, friends, and family members, but rather that commonalities among worlds override differences. In these cases, students' worlds are merged by their common socio-cultural components rather than bounded by conspicuous differences.

Ryan Moore, a white middle-class student at Explorer High School in the Bolivar School District, typifies an adolescent whose worlds are congruent. According to Ryan, all of the people in his life essentially believe and value the same things. When Ryan leaves his family in the morning and joins his friends to walk to school he does not have to shift gears. His friends and their parents esteem the same things as Ryan and his parents--family cohesiveness and education are primary values.

> SO IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU SOUGHT OUT THE KIDS WHO HAVE THE SAME VALUES YOU DO.
>
> Yeah, it works better that way because they all--the people that don't really get good grades in our group, they want to get good grades and they're always working. It's not like they're just here because the state says they have to be. (EX37STA:421-432)

In fact, when Ryan's peers deviate from known and accepted ways of behaving, not only are eyebrows raised but friends reaffirm, with each other, what is acceptable.

SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN OR BECOME RIDICULED FOR DOING HOMEWORK AND THAT SORT OF THING?

No. No, like I remember one of our friends, he was trading baseball cards the day before finals, and it got around--'he's trading baseball cards!' And everybody else was going to people's houses to study and then here's this guy sitting out on his front lawn with a couple of other guys trading baseball cards and it was like 'you know what I saw him doing?' (with shock) No way! (EX37STA:434-448)

At school, teachers' language and communication style, conceptions of the necessary strategies for success such as compliance, hard work, and academic achievement, and pervading upward mobility norms match the values, beliefs and behaviors of Ryan's family. Although Ryan likes some teachers better than others, his academic performance is unaffected by his preferences--he does well across subjects. Ryan, like many other high achieving students, has long-term goals and aspirations which allow him to overlook, ignore, or rationalize classroom circumstances that are not optimal in his view. Working towards future aspirations takes precedence over any immediate discomfort he may feel because of a particular class or teacher.

People's perceptions of Ryan are also remarkably similar. Parents, friends, and teachers all report that Ryan is an excellent student, a thoughtful learner, and a "really nice kid, well-liked by everybody." Everyone expects that Ryan will get good grades, will behave in a thoughtful and mature manner, and will no doubt attend a prestigious college. Ryan's expectations of himself are not dissimilar.

Everybody wants to get good grades because I mean now, everybody sees their future. And they realize that you can't mess around in school--you can mess around after school but you've got to be serious while you're here.
WHAT DO YOU SEE YOURSELF DOING IN FOUR YEARS?
Oh, I want to go to Polytechnic cause my dad went there. I like it there, it seems like the kind of school I'd like. (EX37STA:454-470)

An important feature which binds Ryan's worlds together is that the actors in his life move across boundaries as well. For example, Ryan's parents have always been

actively involved in school affairs, and currently both of his parents participate in parent programs at Explorer High School. Ryan's teachers either know his parents or are aware of their school involvement. Ryan describes his parents as supportive of his school activities and he is proud that they take an active role. Likewise, Ryan's friends live in his neighborhood, "hang out" at his house, and interact comfortably with his parents. There is nothing about Ryan's family (culturally or socioeconomically) that sets him apart from his friends or their families. Getting together with friends also reinforces similarities.

> Well, we'll go to somebody's house and watch movies or--they'll come to my house and we'll play ping pong. Just basically just get together. The big thing is being together. We get to talk everything out about the week, and complain about what you want to complain about. Everybody has the same complaints. (EX37STB:535-543)

Ryan's friends also cross into his school world--he does not, for example, leave his friends in the neighborhood to go across town to a distant school. At school, Ryan and his friends are in an accelerated academic track and frequently have the same teachers. As a result, teachers not only know Ryan's friends but they also know or at least have some knowledge of his family.

Rarely, however, do Ryan and his friends intermingle with students in other peer groups. At Explorer High School, students describe boundaries between groups as rigid and impenetrable. Ryan's response when asked if ethnic groups intermingle illuminates his view of differences and illustrates boundary maintaining measures:

> ...if they speak Spanish and don't speak English, or they speak Vietnamese but hardly any English they tend to hang together. But if they speak English well, they'll hang around with other people, except for the Hispanics--they tend to hang around in gangs.
>
> Not formal gangs, just--they're kind of like a group that goes around and you see and you realize, 'okay, they're here, I want to be there. When they're there, I

> want to be here.' ...It seems like they don't want to be bused here. So they're going to make our lives miserable here and bring with them the way they hang downtown.
>
> ...it's because they think, well we had to get bused down here because somebody spoke up and now we don't want to be here so let's let them know that we don't want to be here. (EX37STA:490-530)

Ryan and his friends have little contact or knowledge about students different than themselves. Classroom and school climate features at Explorer exacerbate these circumstances. For example, tracking in some subjects serves to segregate Ryan and his friends from students in lower level classes. In Ryan's untracked general science class (which he was required to take as a freshman) pedagogy is teacher dominated and there is little interaction or discussion among students. When answering end-of-chapter questions, Ryan works exclusively with his friends and views other students in the class, who are not as academically successful, as responsible for an unchallenging curriculum. None of Ryan's classes have incorporated cooperative learning techniques and few provide opportunities for students to work together or to discuss ideas. Further, most of the curriculum, includes limited information about people of color or wider socio-economic issues dealing with reasons for stratification and unequal opportunities. In general, Explorer's school environment provides little opportunity for Ryan or his friends to move (intellectually or physically) outside of their bounded, congruent worlds. For the most part, school features mitigate against the development of inter-group understandings.

Other students in our sample also describe congruent worlds where boundaries are barely perceived and border crossing is not a problem. This type is not unfamiliar, and not surprisingly it frequently includes white, middle to upper-middle class, high achieving adolescents. However, not all of these students are high achieving. For

example, Joseph Foster, a middle-class Caucasian student at Canyon High School in the Montevideo School District, maintains passing grades (mostly D's and C's) and has no desire to achieve at a higher level. Nor do Joseph's teachers or parents expect him to do so. Joseph's teachers and counselor say that he is performing as well as he can and his parent's primary expectations are that he pass his classes and graduate from high school. Nobody, including Joseph, expects that he will go to college.

However, Joseph is clear about his future and everyone (parents, friends, and teachers) supports his goals. Like his father, Joseph plans to enter the construction business and aspires to own his own company.

> I want to be a contractor. ...Well that's what my dad is. Yeah, I want to have my own business. [My dad] well, he wants me to do that, and my mom, she sees that my dad does good, so she thinks it's a good idea.
>
> WHAT ABOUT THEIR EXPECTATIONS IN TERMS OF SCHOOL?
> Well, they just want me to get by passing. I mean, they don't want me to be an A student, they just want me to pass. I'm not gonna go [to college]. My dad didn't go to college either. (CA11STB.200-256)

Family, peer, and teacher expectations of Joseph are similar, allowing him to move without dissonance between worlds. Joseph's actions in school are in accord with acceptable standards of behavior--teachers believe that he is working academically to the limits of his capability, they perceive him as pleasant and agreeable, and they view his active participation in school sports as evidence of his involvement. Further, Joseph has specific plans for the future which include definite occupational goals, well in line with culturally acceptable work patterns. His counselor and some of his teachers know Joseph's older brother (who also attended Canyon) and his parents, who participate in school affairs by attending parent conferences and sporting events. They describe Joseph as "coming from a really nice, supportive family." Joseph is not a student that

teachers worry about.

Type II: Different Worlds/Boundary Crossings Managed

For some students, family, peer and/or school worlds are different (with respect to culture, ethnicity, socio-economic status or religion), thereby requiring adjustment and reorientation as movement between contexts occurs. For example, a student's family world may be dominated by an all encompassing religious doctrine in which values and beliefs are often contrary to those found in school and peer worlds. For other students, home and neighborhood are viewed as starkly different than school--particularly for minority students who are bused. And for still other students, differences between peers and family are dominant themes. Regardless of the differences, in this type students' perception of boundaries between worlds does not prevent them from managing crossings or adapting to different settings. However, this does not mean that crossings are always easy or that adjustments are made without personal and psychic costs.

Elvira is a student who describes demarcated boundaries vividly. She portrays her home and predominantly Filipino neighborhood as vastly different from the environment of school.

> ...up here it's really different. Like how it looks. Up here for some reason it looks so much cleaner and nicer and it makes you feel happy to be here, you know? Cause I just like stand on our upper floor [of the school]--if you play softball you just look at those condos or whatever those are, it's called The Renaissance and just look over there. (CA09STB:674-682)

Elvira entered Canyon High School in the spring of her 10th grade year (the school includes grades ten to twelve) and has maintained a 3.67 grade point average for three semesters. She rises at 5:20 am and, as a participant in the school district's desegregation program, catches a bus to Canyon High School, located in an affluent,

upper middle-class neighborhood almost an hour from her home. Eighty percent of Canyon students go on to college. Elvira's reasons for choosing to attend this school illustrate her perceptions of differences between home/neighborhood and school worlds.

> Oh they said, the people were friendlier up here and the population--cause some of my friends...they get tired of seeing so many Filipinos and they want a different atmosphere so they come up here. ....Most of the Filipino guys down south are like hoods or involved in gangs and stuff, and you [I] don't want that. They have long hair and when you come up here it's a little bit more different.
>
> ...also down south there's a lot of like girls that are involved in gangs too. I just get lazy cause I don't like to do my hair a lot and lots of the girls down south they always fix their hair every day and put on like black eyeliner. When they look at you they just like think you're weird or something. (CA09STA.62-85)
>
> Sometimes I'm fine....It's like they live life more freely up here and that's what I like about it--they have cars, they can go out to lunch. ...I just like go home to do homework. (CA09STA:766-773)

Elvira is both fascinated and disturbed by this environment. She has few neighborhood friends who attend Canyon and the social adjustment has been painful and difficult. Her daily transitions to and from school are characterized by dissonance, in part, due to her difficulty in connecting with the Canyon peer culture. When asked about friends, she replied:

> Like two or three people. And they introduced me to some of their friends and other people in my class. But ...still it's a problem because during lunch time I get lost and I don't know who to hang around with and there's so many cliques ...they grow up together, especially like the natives up here at Canyon. They're just already there, cause you can sense it in most of your classes. They're just, 'you know, we went to so and so's house...to a party...did you go to that party the other day? And guess who I saw the other day.' (CA09STA:167-180)

Elvira feels she is an outsider to these interactions. At the same time, one of her primary objectives is <u>not</u> to stand out. She describes poignantly her horror of being the target of blatant discrimination because of her status as a bused student.

> And well, most of the people here are friendly. There are a few that are like kind of not--I don't know, I guess they are not willing to integrate or they don't

> really want to. Sometimes I'm fine. But like, walking with a friend, there are these two guys and they're like saying, 'New York City, here comes deprogram.' [referring to Elvira and her friend as bused students) I hate that, it's like oh my God, and I try to ignore them but... (CA09STA.113-128)

Despite Elvira's perception of the stark differences between her home/neighborhood and school, there are also similarities. For example, Elvira's parents, as well as her teachers, expect her to achieve academically. When asked about her parents' expectations she replied:

> Oh I guess mostly it's like do your own things--well not get F's and D's, ...I think they mostly expect As and Bs, cause that's what I've been getting all along. .. they expect us to get grades higher--not lower than a C. Because my sister got a D in PE once and ...he (my father) was so mad. (CA09STA.426-446)
>
> ... Well I don't know, I guess they don't know what to expect, they just want us to live a successful life, kind of like theirs. ...As long as we're getting good grades. (CA09STB.335-340)

Elvira's parents know the importance of good grades with respect to higher education. Elvira says they ask her frequently, "Are you going to go to college?" Their hopes and expectations for her future are clear. Likewise, Elvira's teachers and counselor also expect that she will attend college and assist her in moving towards that goal. Her quiet manner, good grades, and nondisruptive behavior invoke positive descriptions from her teachers and counselor. However, no one at the school is aware of the difficult transitions she experiences daily.

Culture, ethnicity, and trying to work out her own place in divergent worlds are repeating themes throughout Elvira's interviews. She views her family and neighborhood as a rigidly bounded Filipino enclave. "There used to be some real Americans, but then they moved," she said. Rarely do the actors in Elvira's life cross the boundaries of her worlds and when they do she is acutely uncomfortable. In fact, she expends energy to

keep everyone apart. Since she has been at Canyon her parents have visited the school twice--once to attend a dance performance, and a second time to attend a meeting for parents about college application procedures. On each occasion Elvira describes being nervous and uneasy. "I wondered if they would be the only Filipinos there?" Nor do the few, non-bused friends Elvira has made at Canyon visit her home--she worries what they would think if they came.

Elvira's feeling of being different is palpable. Nevertheless, she has adopted strategies to overcome the barriers she perceives. For example, finding it difficult to "hang out" at lunchtime, Elvira has joined a dance group which practices at noon. In classes, she tentatively initiates talk with peers who sit nearby. Further, interviews suggest that Elvira is an astute observer of the actions and behaviors of others, thereby enabling her to adopt styles and to practice interaction patterns similar to students with whom she is attempting to connect.

Another strategy she has adopted to manage the difficult crossing to this school environment is to turn her complete attention to schoolwork.

> ...when I do my homework or my other work, I usually put all my effort into it. So it's kind of hard when you get a bad grade, cause other people, you know, they don't do anything and it's like copy other people or whatever and they just pass with a C and they're happy but you know I want to do better or do more. (CA09STB:62-71)

Observing Elvira in classes confirms her attention to lessons. Even in classes that seem dull or in which students harass the teacher, Elvira is attentive. Elvira has not only internalized norms of upward mobility she equates academic achievement with reaching her goals.

> [I want] a higher life, a higher status. It's like my standards of living are higher than what my parents have. It's like I don't know. I guess it's just a dream but

> ...the ultimate would be living either in a nice little house in Hawaii, or a nice big house in Crespi [the Canyon neighborhood]. With some nice car. I don't know what kind of car. Right now I want a Cabriolet. A white one with a white top. But I don't really know. Crespi is the best, they're so nice. (CA09STB:1243-1259)

Finally, Elvira has completely disengaged from any involvement with her sister's friends. Maria, who is one year younger, has chosen to attend the family's neighborhood high school rather than participate in the district's busing program. According to Elvira, her sister is "into her own race" and frequently mentions hating white people. Many of her sister's friends are in gangs--"two have been stabbed, another has stabbed someone." Though peripherally interested in these events, Elvira remains distant from any involvement.

> "I think it's pretty interesting, but...it's their business. It's their business but it's not really my concern." (CA09STA2:56-59)

In order to embrace the school world at Canyon, Elvira has had to consciously separate herself from her sister's peer group where values and beliefs would mitigate against her successful adaptation to the Canyon environment.

Elements of the school environment pull her in--the care and concern of teachers and her counselor, the positive response to her academic achievements, an opportunity to develop an expanded vision of what is possible. The general belief by others in the school environment, that she can and will do well, is reinforcing. Her parents support and expectations for her future are congruent with teachers and counselors at the school. However, some school features impede her progress. For example, Elvira's classes are rarely structured to allow students to interact with each other. Peer interaction is something she would like. Although this type of classroom organization has not affected her grades, it has certainly not facilitated her connection with other students. Although

transition to the peer world at Canyon has been difficult, Elvira is slowly making progress at acquiring new friends. Perhaps most important, Elvira says, "I want to be someplace where I'm socially accepted." Social acceptance is a recurring theme for Elvira. Managing to cross the border between her home/neighborhood and school, each day she struggles to find her place at Canyon High School. Not surprisingly, this type--different worlds/crossings managed--frequently includes academically successful minority students. In some cases, students who successfully cross boundaries "hang out" with an ethnically mixed group of peers who also get good grades. Trinh, a high achieving Vietnamese student, has a peer group of this configuration. Trinh has lived in an upper middle-class neighborhood and has attended predominantly upper middle-class schools since her arrival in the United States 15 years ago. She now attends Huntington High School in the Bolivar School District.

Most of Trinh's friends, whom she has met in her classes, are culturally different from her Vietnamese family. In school, she talks and lunches with her peer group and has adopted behavioral and interaction patterns similar to white middle class adolescents. The peers whom Trinh has chosen for friends provide a reference group less constricted in their expectations than her traditional Vietnamese family.

> Friends are important because I can talk and share things that I wouldn't normally with my family. I can tell them things and they would see both sides of the story, unlike when I tell parents and they usually just talk of their point of view. ...In this [peer] world, I can be myself without worrying of their high expectations of me. I can act silly without having them stare at me and thinking I'm childish like in the family world. (HT30:Student Essay)

Trinh has adopted a number of strategies that allow her to cross boundaries from home to school and peers. First, she has selected high achieving friends, thus acquiring a peer group with <u>some</u> values (e.g., emphasis on academic achievement) similar to those of her

parents. Second, she strives to keep her family/peer and school worlds separate by not transporting actors across boundaries. With respect to her family this is not a problem, since Vietnamese parents often place great trust and confidence in school authorities, and therefore rarely visit their children's schools. Nevertheless, Trinh's parents emphasize vigorously the importance of education and the need for her to achieve academically in the American educational system.

Nor do Trinh's friends cross the boundary to her family world. Adolescents do not "hang out" at her house. Instead, she arranges activities with friends away from her home, knowing that the traditional Vietnamese values of her parents about what is appropriate behavior for adolescents may not coincide with the actions of her friends. Although Trinh has been able to persuade her parents to allow her to participate in some activities, there are others that they will not permit. For example, Trinh can go to the mall with girlfriends, but not by herself. Nor do her parents allow her to spend the night at friend's homes, or to date. Trinh has adopted strategies for operating in both home and school/peer worlds, but in so doing, she must always hide a part of who she is.

Type III: Different Worlds/Boundary Crossings Hazardous

In this category, like the former, students define their family, peer and/or school worlds as distinct. They say they must adjust and reorient as they move across worlds and among contexts. However, unlike students who manage border crossing successfully, these students find transitions hazardous. In fact in many cases, border crossing is possible only under particular conditions. For example, a student may do well academically in a class where the teacher's interaction style, the students' role, or the

learning activity are similar to what takes place within the students' peer and/or family worlds. Frequently, these students are less successful in classrooms in which norms and behaviors are not only different from, but oppositional to, those they encounter with their families and friends. Likewise, some students in this category describe their comfort and ease at school and with peers, but are essentially estranged from their parents. In these cases, parents' values and beliefs are frequently more traditional, more religious, or more constrained than those of their children, making adaptation to their home world difficult and conflictual. In this category, boundary crossing involves friction and unease. For example, students who do well in one class may fail all others--frequently they do not know why. Or an adolescent may rail against their parents' conservatism. This pattern often includes adolescents on the brink between success and failure, involvement and disengagement, commitment and apathy. These are some of the students for whom classroom and school climate conditions can mean the difference between staying in school or dropping out.

Donna Carlota, a Mexican-American student at Huntington High School, is an example of a student who thrives academically when the values, beliefs, expectations, and normative ways of behaving are consistent across her family, peer, and school worlds, and who disengages from school when they are not. A fourth generation American, and the oldest of four children in a single-parent family, Donna is working to be the first in her family to graduate from high school.

Donna's mother demonstrates concern and interest in her children's schooling and takes an active role to insure their best interests. For example, although the family lives outside Huntington High School's attendance area, Donna's mother met with and persuaded school authorities to allow both her daughters to attend this school. She

perceives Huntington's resources and location in an upper middle-class area as extra protection which will ensure that her children graduate from high school. Donna is well aware of her mother's concerns.

> She really wants us not to be like her. She wants us to learn from her mistakes. And they're not really mistakes, but she says that she doesn't regret none of them, but she regrets not going to school.....Really, mainly, she wants us to graduate out of high school. To go out, graduate, since she didn't really do that. She wants us to be responsible. You know, for my brothers. If someday they become a father, she wants them to understand - she doesn't want them to go and be making mistakes, making something and just walking away from it....Most of the pressure is on me, cause I'm the oldest. (HT52STB:1079-1104)

Donna maintains a position of authority and responsibility with respect to school, the household, and her younger siblings. For example, her mother leaves many decisions related to schooling entirely to Donna, e.g., whether or not to attend school on a given day, whether or not to do homework. Overseeing her brother and sisters' homework assignments is also left to Donna. According to Donna, these responsibilities are indicative of the trust her mother has in her judgements.

Relationships and experiences in Donna's peer world are similar to her relationship with her mother. Popular with her friends, she holds a position of leadership and responsibility in her Mexican-American peer group, often organizing outings or acting as a mediator when arguments flare. Predominant peer group norms include helping one another and putting others' interests first.

In both Donna's family and peers worlds, emotional openness is valued. For example, according to Donna, her true friends know all there is to know about her, and she knows all there is to know about them. Family problems are not hidden, but discussed openly. The most striking aspects of Donna's peer and family worlds is the lack of separation between them. Unlike many teens, Donna is proud to be seen with

her mother and family and treats her mother as one of her girlfriends:

> Yeah, my mom knows most of my friends, my girlfriends that is. And she'll go out with us, shopping or whatever. Like last weekend, Anita and I were going shopping and we invited my mom to go, but she was too tired. And my friends will talk to her about all sorts of things. Like my mom, you can talk to her about guys, she likes to talk about guys. She's not like a lot of parents, really strict about that. (HT52STC:285-296)

The actors in Donna's peer and family worlds intermingle regularly. But how do Donna's family and peer worlds, between which boundaries are barely perceived, combine to affect her involvement in school?

For Donna's friends, school achievement is secondary to having fun, maintaining friendships, and developing relationships with the opposite sex. Her friends' academic achievement ranges from average to poor. Peer expectations, such as putting other's interests first, can negatively effect school performance. When, for example, Donna half completes a school assignment due in 20 minutes and a friend has not begun, she will neglect her own work in order to help her friend. If Donna is hurrying to class, and a friend calls out to her, she will stop to talk. Her friend's needs outweigh the negative aspects of the tardy she will receive. When she is given a detention, she expects the same friend to stay after school with her for several days to keep her company. When there are troubles with family and friends, Donna's attention to her school work declines. At the same time, Donna's friends are opposed to school failure, which is considered shameful, rather than something to be proud of.

> ...if I get a bad grade, Anita will say 'What's this 'D' Donna? A 'D'? Come on!'....My friends might feel like they're low or something, but they're not proud of getting straight F's or nothing like that. And not all of my friends get bad grades. Some of them get good grades....You usually don't find out that they got a bad grade unless one of them gets grounded. Than you know that report cards just came out. And also, if one of them does badly they'll just change the subject real quick. That's how you know they don't want to talk about it. (HT52STC:346-375)

In short, while Donna's peers do not rank school first in their concerns, they do support Donna in her efforts to graduate from high school. Overall, Donna has maintained a C average at Huntington High School, though her grades fluctuate across classes. In some of Donna's classes, teachers encourage discussion and the sharing of ideas. In others, cooperative learning techniques are used. Donna identifies these classrooms as easy, and does well, while her teachers describe Donna as a mature and model student. In other classrooms instruction is primarily teacher centered, interaction among students is discouraged, and students are usually expected to be passive learners. Donna tends to daydream in these classes, identifies them as difficult, and does poorly academically. Further, these teachers barely recognize who she is.

> There's a lot of my teachers who tell me to keep up the good work, and they just compliment me, and tell me to keep getting good grades and stuff, which is fine. They always tell me,' I want you to be a good student,' and they, a lot of them say 'I really appreciate having you in class' and stuff. And it's nice. The class I'm getting an 'F' in, he to me seems like, he doesn't really pay attention to anybody in particular in class. It's just a whole class, and this is math but ....there's really no one who could talk about him. So I don't know what he actually means.He doesn't look at me, and he knows when I do work, I do work, and I do listen to him. (HT52STC:1249-1268)

Donna does well in classrooms where she perceives the teacher as caring and where the norms and behaviors which characterize her family and peer worlds--group over self, listening and empathizing with others, and mediation skills--are required. In classroom contexts where these skills are not utilized and the teacher is perceived as remote, Donna's attention shifts to peer group concerns. In these situations, Donna finds crossing the boundary from peer to school worlds difficult.

Other students in our study are not dissimilar to Donna, though many are in more danger academically. For example, Manuella, a second-generation Mexican American student at Maple High School in Montevideo School District, has received A's

and B's in two academic classes but is failing all the rest. Her school records through the seventh grade reveal high grades and test scores; in fact in junior high school, Manuella was an identified gifted student. In the eighth grade Manuella's grades began to drop. In high school, they have plummeted. The two classes in which Manuella has done well have been organized to promote student/student interaction. For example in history, Manuella and four other students work regularly as a group on class assignments. In this situation Manuella serves frequently as a resource to the others and the classroom arrangement makes it unnecessary for Manuella to have to transition from peers to a more traditional teacher-dominated environment. Further, Manuella perceives this teacher as particularly caring, concerned, and interested in her personally. "I can really talk to Mr. Castenada," she says.

In contrast, classes that Manuella is failing are characterized by teachers who lecture, where work is often confined to reading textbook chapters and answering end-of-chapter questions, and in which interaction is confined to students responding to teacher-initiated questions. In these classes Manuella withdraws, shuts down, tunes out. None of these teachers know that she has been successful in other classroom contexts and they believe her failure stems from a lack of motivation and self-discipline.

Type IV: Borders Impenetrable/Boundary Crossing Insurmountable

For some students, the values, beliefs, and expectations are so discordant across worlds that boundary crossing is resisted or impossible. When border crossing is attempted, it is frequently so painful that, over time, these students develop reasons and rationales to protect themselves against further distress. In such cases, boundaries are viewed as insurmountable and students actively or passively resist attempts to embrace

other worlds. For example, some students say that school is irrelevant to their lives. Other students immerse themselves fully in the world of their peers. Rather than moving from one setting to another, blending elements of all, these students remain constrained by boundaries they perceive as rigid and impenetrable.

Sonia Gonzalez, who attends Explorer High School in the Bolivar School District, typifies a student who does not cross boundaries. Last semester she received straight F's and has almost completely disengaged from school involvement. Sonia perceives borders between her home and peer worlds and that of school as essentially opposed to one another. A second-generation American, Sonia entered school speaking Spanish. By the fifth grade she was classified as English proficient. Growing up in a Mexican barrio, Sonia has maintained her orientation towards her Mexican heritage. At home and with her friends--the majority of whom are bilingual--Spanish is the language of choice. Mexican traditions and practices are emphasized in her family and among her friends. However, there is no question that Sonia possesses bilingual/bicultural skills. For example, her academic history through the eighth grade is relatively optimistic. During this time she earned mostly B's and C's. In high school her grades have plummeted--last year she failed four out of five academic classes and the first semester of her sophomore year, she did not pass any.

According to Sonia, the boundaries between her school and peer world became impassible when, desiring to be popular, she moved into a new female Mexican-American peer group. Sonia's peer world consists of socio/cultural components fundamentally different from and opposed to those that are required both for success in school and the wider society.

I don't know, but Mexicans are more crazier than white people. It's like we have like different kinds of thinking I guess, I don't know. Like we want to do everything, it's like--they [white people] take everything slowly you know...and I don't know, it's just that they think about the future more and stuff. And us, you know what happens, happens. And it's just meant to happen. And it's like - we do crazy things, and we never think about the consequences that might happen.

And like white people over here in this area right here, like everything's more quiet, more serious, you know. You don't see like - it's really rare to see a teenager pregnant, it's like more Mexican and black people are the ones that come out pregnant. And you don't see like white people screwing around. And when you go to Juvenile, you never see like a white person in there, cause they have their act together and Mexicans, they just tend to screw around all the time....(EX56STB:965-1032)

Expectations in Sonia's peer group include being available to give advice, listening in good times and in bad, and doing crazy things such as taking risks and having fun. There is an explicit recognition among group members that pro-school behavior is not congruent with group norms and expected behaviors.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OF THE SAME CLASSES TOGETHER?

No, unfortunately. Well in a way it's better because if we were together we would have really screwed up. Cause like when me and her get together, we just screw around all the time. And so it's better to stay away from each other....Cause otherwise we don't care about school or anything when we're together. Cause we have a lot of fun together. (EX56STB:234-250)

With these friends, Sonia skips classes, ignores homework, gets into trouble with legal and school authorities, and gets involved--sometimes as a participant, sometimes as an accomplice--in the gang activity carried out by male friends. Sonia believes that the behavior required to succeed in school precludes popularity among the prominent Mexican-American crowd.

According to Sonia, her family has little influence on her school behavior. Her relationship with her father--a production worker--is distant and antagonistic, and he has little involvement in her life. In contrast, she has a close, sisterly relationship with her

mother who was raised in an upper middle-class family in Mexico where she graduated from high school. Sonia talks to and seeks advice from her mother about her friends, boys, and school. In turn, her mother shares her concerns about her marriage with Sonia. According to Sonia, her mother constantly urges her to raise her grades, and to consider going to college. However, she is unable to assist Sonia with homework and is uncertain of what role she should play with respect to school involvement. Sonia believes that her mother is uncomfortable crossing into the world of school because she has no knowledge or experience with the American educational system. Because of this, most of the responsibility for seeking and getting educational assistance is on Sonia's shoulders.

Sonia sees her situation as starkly different from many of the students at Explorer High School who do well academically. She describes vividly the difficultly she experiences in crossing boundaries between her family/peer and school worlds.

> It's really confusing. And some people that understand me, they say, 'it's really easy, what's wrong with you? It's easy.' But it's hard, it's hard. Probably it depends on what kind of background you have too, cause if you have parents that been to college, they've been prepared, and they're pretty much prepared--you pretty much have a better idea what's going on, you like understand things better, cause you grew up in the kind of environment that, you know, they understand more. But if you have parents that dropped out and stuff like that, you know, it's different, it's harder. Cause you try to get help from them, you know, when you're doing your homework. They don't understand what you're doing, they don't know. And it's hard, it's harder. (EX56STB:793-814)

Sonia's difficulties in crossing boundaries between family/peer and school worlds are exacerbated by the fact that she has few connections to school. Her comments and our observations reveal that she has little meaningful contact with her high school teachers. According to Sonia, she has never had a teacher who spoke adamantly about the successes and strengths of Mexican culture, or who spoke to her personally about

her future. Further, she believes that her teachers communicate negative images about her ethnic identity:

> White teachers, some of them are kind of prejudiced ....It's probably the way they look at you, the way they talk, you know, when they're talking about something--like when they talk about the people who are going to drop out. And Mr. Kula, when he's talking about teenage pregnancy or something like that, he turns around and looks at us [Sonia and her Mexican female friends]. It's like, he tries to look around the whole room, so we won't notice, but like he mostly like tries to tell us, tries to get it through our heads you know. (EX56STB:1884-1911)

Sonia also perceives little support and even direct hostility from her non-Mexican peers. Her statements reflect the intense discomfort she feels in classes without her friends.

> Cause you feel uncomfortable in a class that--you know, where there's practically no Mexicans in there. So nobody you can talk to. And then the people in there, they're like really stuck up, you know. It makes me uncomfortable to be in that class cause they're like--you feel like they're talking about you or something. It's uncomfortable cause they're like stuck up, they don't like talking to you. You might say hi or hello and sometimes they don't answer back. And that's why I don't like them, you know. (EX56STB:855-874)

Sonia's description illuminates her feelings of being an outsider. There appear to be few features in her classes which operate to pull her in and ensure her inclusion as a respected and valuable member of the group. Further, none of her teachers are aware of the intense discomfort she feels. Security, acceptance, and a strong sense of belonging characterize Sonia's involvement in her peer world. These qualities are not replicated in the world of school. And why would Sonia risk potential ostracism for being a "school girl" to embrace a school world which she perceives as hostile and cold? The combination of peer group norms (which devalue academic success) and school features which fail to address her individual needs create boundaries which are insurmountable.

Students who describe boundaries as impenetrable also include those unable to cross into the world of peers or family. For example, Jeffrey, a white student at

Huntington High School, describes vividly the alienation and loneliness he feels without friends. Jeffrey says it is impossible to concentrate on school when all he can think about is how isolated he is. Jeffrey's low grades (and high test scores) are indicative of his inability to focus on school. However, during his first semester at Huntington, Jeffrey went to a peer counselor who encouraged him to participate in Huntington's drama program. Jeffrey has subsequently become actively involved, not only in drama but also in peer counseling. These programs have helped Jeffrey connect with some friends but his standing with peers remains tenuous. Most of Jeffrey's teachers are unaware of the difficulties he faces--others do not consider the educational implications of his inability to make friends. For example, Jeffrey's science teacher asked students to work together in groups but did not notice that Jeffrey, unable to connect with peers, sat quietly alone.

Other students in this type perceive demarcated boundaries between peer and family worlds. In these situations, conflicts are frequently acute and students' energies and attention are diverted from engagement in learning. Locked in conflict with their families, these students see school involvement as extraneous to the other pressures in their lives.

## Discussion

This paper presents a model for thinking about the interrelationship of students' family, peer, and school worlds and in particular, how they combine to affect students' engagement with schools and learning. We have generated a typology to illustrate patterns of movement and adaptation strategies as students move across worlds and interact in different contexts and social settings. Although each of the four types contain

variety with respect students' perceptions of boundaries, there are nevertheless some common themes.

In our sample, most of the students who describe congruent worlds and smooth transitions (Type I) are members of two-parent families who place a high value on family cohesiveness. Family values include an orientation towards the future, academic achievement or doing the "best one can," and conformity to acceptable standards of behavior. These students' friends reinforce the value of effort with respect to school, sports, and work. Further, the actors in their lives move across the boundaries of their worlds--friends go to each other's homes and are in the same classes at school. Parents attend school events (e.g., sports, drama) and participate in teacher conferences and parent organizations. It is well known by teachers, either personally or through word of mouth, that parents support teacher efforts and are available if problems should arise.

Teachers frequently feel comfortable with these students, for they do not cause problems and rarely exhibit behaviors that are worrisome. Further, teachers perceive these students as being on the right track. For example, one of Ryan's teachers described him as "programmed for success." Other teachers, however, express concern that these "well-adjusted and successful" students are the ones forgotten. And in fact, we have found that these students express frequently tremendous pressures--anxiety about the future, living up to the expectations of those around them, maintaining high grades.

Further, students who are secure and comfortable within the bounds of their congruent worlds may have an especially difficult time connecting with peers unlike themselves. Many have little opportunity and reason to practice or acquire boundary crossing strategies. Distanced from students in other groups, it is these students who are particularly "at risk" for developing spurious ideas and stereotypes about others. Some

of these students are uninterested in getting to know or working or interacting with students who achieve at different levels or are who have different backgrounds. Constantly reinforced for their "on-track" behaviors, they can be quick to denigrate divergent actions by others. In a sense, their view is limited and bounded by the congruency of their worlds.

Students whose worlds are different but manage to successfully traverse boundaries (Type II) are, like the previous students, often overlooked by their teachers. They too present few problems--they appear to "fit in" and their behavior is in accord with acceptable classroom and school norms. Nevertheless, these students are frequently an enigma to their teachers who have no knowledge of their families or the reasons for their success. Their invisibility as individuals is illuminated by teacher descriptions which expose the lack of even the most fundamental knowledge about students' backgrounds. For example, one teacher in our study praised Trinh's behavior saying, "she is a model Chinese student."

Even though many students are able to cross perceived boundaries successfully, they are forced frequently to deny aspects of who they are. This is illuminated by these youths' efforts to keep the actors in their worlds separate, and the tremendous discomfort they feel when unable to do so. Because teachers view these students as "well adjusted," the conflicts and difficulties they may feel can be overlooked or discounted as unimportant. Teachers' relief that students "fit in," do well academically, and present few problems precludes their attention to important aspects of individuals' lives, e.g., the energy and effort required to navigate different worlds successfully.

Students whose worlds are different and boundary cross only under certain conditions (Type III), often teeter between engagement and withdrawal (whether with

family, school, or friends). For youth whose family and peer worlds stand in contrast to that of the school, academic success occurs sporadically. In classrooms where students flourish, teachers know the students well, are attuned to their needs, and show personal concern for their lives. These teachers are aware of their students' precarious academic status and incorporate various pedagogical methods to ensure student involvement. In classrooms where students do poorly, teachers often classify them as overall low achievers and are unaware of their successes. For example, Manuella's math teacher, in whose class she had spent five hours a week for almost a full academic year, did not know who she was. Low expectations and pessimism about students' abilities characterize these teachers' views. Blame for students' failures is placed on students' personal characteristics or forces outside the school, e.g., the students' family or peers. These teachers rarely suspect that classroom features, pedagogical style, or their own attitudes may influence powerfully students' ability to succeed and connect with the school environment.

Finally, students who describe borders as impenetrable and boundary crossing as insurmountable (Type IV), say that attempts to embrace other worlds create stress and anxiety. As a result, these students orient towards situations where support is found and away from circumstances which exacerbate their discomfort. For example, students alienated from school may turn their attention to peers. Or students, like Jeffrey who are alienated from peers spend time with extended family members. However, the inability of these students to cross boundaries does not imply necessarily that they are opposed completely to school. Students who perceive borders between family and/or peers and school as impenetrable say that classroom and school climate features do not support their needs. In fact, they frequently describe instances of insensitivity or hostility

from teachers and other students which threaten their personal integrity or devalue their background circumstances (e.g., religious or cultural). In fact, many voice a desire to obtain the skills necessary to cross successfully into the school environment.

The multiple worlds model has important implications for schools and learning. Perhaps most significant, it provides teachers and others a way of thinking about their students in a more holistic way. Further, the model suggests a focus for educators as they think about school features which can impact students' lives. In order to create environments where students are able to work together in classrooms, to solve problems jointly, and to have equal investment in schools and learning, we need to identify institutional structures which operate to facilitate boundary crossing strategies and which do not require students to give up or hide important features of their lives. This requires more than understanding other cultures. It means that students must acquire skills and strategies to work comfortably and successfully in divergent social settings and with people different than themselves. Teachers and administrators in all of our schools talk about the importance of fostering school environments where differences are valued rather than feared. This line of work supports efforts to achieve this goal.

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## APPENDIX A

### Montevideo School District

Maple (MA) -- Located in a predominantly white, middle-class community ranging from professional to low-income, welfare families, Maple's student population of 1121 is currently 45% White and 55% minority. However, as few as eight years ago, Maple's 2000 students were primarily white, middle-to upper-class and college bound. Since that time, dramatic changes have occurred. The opening of Canyon High School to the north caused a redistribution of the student population drawing many of Maple's more affluent, upper middle-class youth. As a result, the student population decreased dramatically. At the same time, the number of students bussed to the school as a part of MITA (Minority-Initiated Transfer Arrangement) increased from 80 in 1980 to 374 in 1985. In addition, 150 special education students were assigned to Maple to help offset diminishing student enrollment. This tremendous shift in the characteristics of the student population has greatly affected teacher morale as well as how they think about their jobs and the students they serve. Many teachers feel cheated that the "cream" was taken away. Changing student characteristics and the difficulty it has created is a theme that dominates teachers' descriptions of Maple.

Canyon (CA) -- Canyon High School is located in an affluent, upper middle-class neighborhood. Eighty percent of the students go on to college. This eight-year old school boasts the reputation of being one of the most highly prized high schools--for both teachers and students--in the Montevideo district. Combining grades ten to twelve, the student population of 1240 includes 450 bussed students. The minority population is 37% but unlike Maple, ethnic diversity and bussing status do not seem to be major topics of concern to teachers, many of whom have been at Canyon since it opened. At this school, in contrast to Maple, morale is high, parents play an active role in school affairs, teachers view themselves as professionals and a positive attitude permeates the environment. The atmosphere at Canyon is pervaded by the optimistic view that problems can be solved in comparison to Maple where difficulties are viewed as overwhelming and survival is the norm.

### Bolivar School District

Huntington (HT) -- Huntington High School is located in a predominantly white, middle-class urban community. The school opened in 1976 with a hand-picked faculty committed to a student-centered democratic organization. Since then, as this mission has been undermined by budget cuts, changing administrations, and new staff, the faculty has split into a group which remains committed to the school's original ideals and those more concerned about protecting teachers' concerns. In 1986, the school underwent court ordered desegregation, and experienced a striking change in its student body population. Minority enrollment increased from 22 to 49 percent between 1985 and 1989 with seven percent of these students arriving by bus. A primarily white middle-class student population was replaced by a large proportion of low-income ethnic

minority students. While many teachers within the faculty mention the adjustments they have felt forced to make in order to respond to a changing student population, a more overriding concern appears to be how district policy, budgetary cuts and a succession of administrations have weakened morale and thwarted the original mission of the school.

Explorer (EX) -- Located three miles down the road from Huntington, Explorer opened in 1960, at which time it drew a predominantly affluent, college-bound student population. Within a few years, construction of new high schools in the district drew off some of Explorer's staff and the more affluent parts of its student body. With desegregation in 1986, the school population changed even more significantly, going from 18 percent minority in 1985 to 52 percent minority in 1989. Twenty percent of these students are bused from outside the school's traditional attendance area. Complicating this issue, increasingly visible gang activity at Explorer has troubled the administration. In contrast to Huntington, this change in student characteristics is the overriding concern for Explorer's teachers, many who yearn for the days before desegregation. The administration has attempted to foster positive attitudes, innovative practices and site-based management to counter declining morale and to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

## Appendix B

### STUDENT STUDY SAMPLE BY TRANSITION PATTERN AND SCHOOL (N=54)

| | Canyon (CA) | Maple (MA) | Huntington (HT) | Explorer (EX) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type A<br>Congruent Worlds/<br>Smooth Transitions | *02 (LCF)**<br>04 (HCM)<br>06 (HCF)<br>07 (HCF)<br>10 (HCM<br>11 (LCM) | 21 (HCF) | 32 (HCM)<br>35 (HCF) | 37 (HCM)<br>47 (HCF) | 11 |
| Type B<br>Different Worlds/<br>Boundary Crossings<br>Managed | 01 (HJF)<br>09 (HFF) | *14 (LHM)<br>15 (HVM)<br>16 (HBF)<br>*17 (HHF)<br>20 (HCM) | *(27 (LBM)<br>28 (HHF)<br>30 (HVF)<br>31 (HVM)<br>34 (HFF)<br>36 (LVM) | 38 (HHM)<br>42 (HVM)<br>43 (HVM)<br>50 (HHF) | 17 |
| Type C<br>Different Worlds/<br>Boundary Crossing<br>Hazardous | *03 (LPM)<br>*05 (LCM)<br>08 (LBF)<br>12 (LBM)<br>24 (LCM) | *13 (HHM)<br>19 (LHF)<br>*22 (LHF) | 25 (LHM )<br>*29 (LVF)<br>52 (LHF) | *40 (LHF)<br>*45 (LVF)<br>49 (LHF)<br>*51 (LBM)<br>55 (LHM) | 16 |
| Type D<br>Borders Impenetrable/<br>Boundary Crossing<br>Insurmountable | | 18 (LCF) | 26 (LHF)<br>*33 (LCM) | 39 (LHM)<br>40 (LHF)<br>46 (LCM)<br>*48 (HVF)<br>53 (LVM)<br>*54 (LHF)<br>*56 (LHF) | 10 |
| TOTAL | | | | | 54 |

*Indicates change in boundary crossing and adaptation patterns during high school. (17 of 54 students)

**The three letters after each student number designates achievement level, ethnicity and gender.

| Achievement Level | Ethnicity | Gender |
|---|---|---|
| H = High | B = Black | F = Female |
| L = Low | C = Caucasian | M = Male |
| | F = Filipino | |
| | H = Hispanic | |
| | P = Palestinian | |
| | V = Vietnamese | |



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